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UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT WASHINGTON, D.C. 20415

Executive Registry

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May 20, 1986

MEMORANDUM FOR:

HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES

FROM:

CONSTANCE HORNER

DIRECTOR

SUBJECT:

USE OF BOGUS DEGREES BY FEDERAL EMPLOYEES

AND JOB APPLICANTS

As the news media have recently publicized, the FBI has found that some Federal employees and job applicants have claimed bogus degrees from diploma mills. I'd like you to know what we're doing in OPM to coordinate a consistent approach to dealing with the problem in the civilian Federal service.

We have been checking FBI-supplied names of individuals with bogus degrees against names of individuals in our Security Investigations Index. We've begun sending names that match to your Personnel Security Officers and Inspector General (or the person designated to perform the Inspector General function). They are being asked to determine whether the person listed as having a bogus degree is currently employed by your agency and, if so, to ascertain whether the bogus degree claim involved material fraud and to report to OPM on the action taken. We will be closely monitoring agency reports and will ourselves be taking action where we have jurisdiction.

We will soon be sending your Director of Personnel a list of institutions identified by the FBI as bogus. This list is for Personnel Directors' use in detecting bogus degree claims in connection with their responsibility to determine applicants' and employees' qualifications. With the list will be guidance on what action to take when material fraud or job-related deception is found to have occurred.

We are now making an additional check when we verify degrees during investigations of applicants and employees. We've had verification procedures for years, but the new check will close a possible loophole in detecting bogus degree claims. Our examining offices will also be using the list of bogus institutions to detect bogus degree claims on applications processed by OPM.

Whenever employees or job applicants rely on bogus degrees for personal gain from Federal employment, fraud is committed and the integrity of the merit system is compromised. I urge you to encourage your staff to do their utmost to help us eliminate this problem.